



# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

COPY

July 31, 1978

Mr. Douglas F. Adams  
Senior Vice President  
The Bank of New York  
48 Wall Street  
New York, New York 10015

Dear Mr. Adams:

Upon assuming the presidency of The Rockefeller University, one of my gratifying obligations is to share a few thoughts with our partners in advancing the work of the superb people who are the heart of this institution. Your participation as a member of the Committee on Trust and Estate Gift Plans is a source of special encouragement to me; and I look forward to being with you at the next meeting of the Committee on September 20.

Many persons have asked me about "my plans" for the University. Presidential selection procedures did behoove me to speculate about future prospects, but we all understand that detailed planning is a participatory and evolutionary experience. It is a process that must involve the diligent deliberation of faculty, trustees and friends.

In accepting the responsibilities of the institution's leadership, I recognize that radical change in scope or direction is neither wise nor realistic. While too rigid a constraint would be stifling, my disposition is to conserve what I find here and to encourage gradual development rather than sudden and sweeping alterations in policies and programs.

The traditions of excellence, of free scientific inquiry, of public service for the good of mankind are so remarkably exemplified at the University that they command my enthusiastic adherence. The severe and persistent stresses facing every research and educational enterprise persuade me that it will be a most demanding and fulfilling task just to sustain those traditions through the 1980's and beyond; but the talent of our staff and the vision expressed in our ongoing programs will keep this campus a place of high scientific adventure.

Our record of unparalleled accomplishment has shown how it is in the very nature of this institution to create the conditions of change and of unexpected opportunity. For example, the virtual conquest of the infectious diseases, to which The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research contributed so much, has moved us now to

emphasize the cellular and genetic mechanisms of chronic, degenerative disorders. Our agenda for the future focuses on several frontiers of enormous global promise, such as in the neurosciences which aim to understand the human brain and the behavior that is correlated with its development, structure and function. These studies have great potential for improving both the treatment of disease and our methods of education.

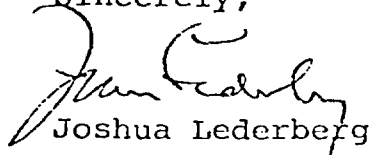
The primary component in research accomplishment is always the quality of the people involved. Keeping the University an attractive environment for the best young minds is of preeminent importance.

My central aspiration then is to ensure that The Rockefeller will remain a premier university, faithful to the core purposes of its founders. With a broad spectrum of investigation and advanced training that ranges from the most basic biological and clinical science to public health applications here and abroad, The Rockefeller University will maintain its place as the prototype of a vital and well-integrated community of scholars.

It would be unthinkable to conclude without paying tribute to my predecessor, Fred Seitz, who with Betty has helped me and my family in this time of transition in so many thoughtful ways. In his final annual report, he wrote about many of the hopes and realities of his own experience in maintaining the highest standards that have always characterized this institution. He had to carry a trying burden of fiscal exigency, facing one blow after another which could have threatened the survival of the University. It is just one measure of his stewardship that the fiscal affairs of the institution are once again stable, that through strenuous efforts both of cost control and of fund raising, the balance sheets for his concluding year were once again in the black. Fred, Pat Haggerty, and David Rockefeller made exceptional efforts to achieve this position. We all know of the urgent need to continue to broaden and renew the base of private support essential to safeguarding the financial equilibrium that Fred and the faculty strove so hard to restore.

This letter can be only a preliminary sketch of my thoughts and feelings as I enter upon this task. As you know, the afternoon of Monday, October 16, has been set as the date of my formal installation. You will receive an invitation early in September. I look forward to meeting with you on that occasion and often thereafter.

Sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg